

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3-21 and 23-41 are presented for consideration, with Claims 1, 21 and 41 being independent.

The independent claims have been amended to further distinguish Applicants' invention from the cited art.

Claims 1, 3-5, 8-13, 16, 21, 23, 24, 28-33, 36 and 41 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as allegedly being obvious over Ludwig '294. Additionally, Claims 6, 7, 18-20, 25-27 and 38-40 are rejected as allegedly being obvious over Ludwig '294 in view of Brunson '823, and Claims 14, 15, 17, 34, 35 and 37 are rejected as allegedly being obvious over Ludwig and further in view of Palmer '683. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Applicants' invention as set forth in Claim 1 relates to a distributed office system provided with terminal devices installed for a plurality of users, and a server device connected to the terminal devices via a communication channel, for displaying information on a screen of a terminal device of each of the users. The server includes receiving means for receiving a picked-up image repeatedly and information on whether a user is presently working or on leave from each of the terminal devices, and transmitting means for transmitting the picked-up image repeatedly and the information to each of the terminal devices. Each of the terminal devices includes receiving means for receiving the picked-up image repeatedly and the information on whether a user is presently working or on leave from each of the terminal devices, and display means for displaying 1) a virtual office area where a group of a user's virtual single rooms of a department are displayed, 2) a class organization button allowing the display means to display an organization charge including departments, 3) information on whether a virtual meeting room for having a meeting with the other users is occupied or vacant, and 4) a dialog

box for communication with a selected user one to one in response to designating a user's virtual single room office of the selected user. In addition, Claim 1 includes changing means for changing display of a first group of the user's virtual single rooms of a first department into display of a second group of the user's virtual single rooms of a second department in response to selecting the second department indicated in the organization chart.

Claims 21 and 41 are directed to a method of managing terminal devices provided for a plurality of users in a distributed office system, and terminal devices, respectively. Similarly to claim 1, these claims are capable of changing a display of a first group of a user's virtual single rooms of a first department into a display of a second group of the user's virtual single rooms of a second department in response to selecting the second department indicated in an organization chart.

In accordance with Applicants' claimed invention, a user-friendly way of changing the display of a first group of a first department into a second group of a second department is provided. This feature of Applicants' invention is discussed, for example, in Figures 7-11, and the accompanying specification beginning on page 21, line 3.

As discussed in the previous Amendment of June 23, 2004, the Ludwig patent relates to a multimedia collaboration system that displays an information aggregate of another user's workstation. A computer-based system uses geographically dispersed multimedia LANs that are connected by a WAN. Ludwig is read to use a collaboration initiator to indicate members registered in an organization, and session participants are selected from a graphical rolodex. New participants can be invited by clicking an ADD button.

In contrast to Applicants' claimed invention, however, Ludwig is not understood to teach or suggest, inter alia, the capability of changing a display of a first group of a

user's virtual single rooms of a first department into a display of second group of the user's virtual single rooms of a second department in response to selecting the second department indicated in an organization chart. The Office Action asserts, on page 3, that Ludwig includes a collaboration initiator in order to change a display from a first group to a second group. As understood, however, as shown in Figures 22 and 23 and the accompanying disclosure, individual participants must be selected from the displayed window in order to initiate a call to a second group or department.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of Claims 1, 3-5, 8-13, 16, 21, 23, 24, 28-33, 36 and 41 under 35 U.S.C. §103 is respectfully requested.

The secondary citations to Brunson and Palmer fail to compensate for the deficiencies in Ludwig. The patent to Brunson relates to a video messaging system, and is relied upon for a teaching of a universal mailbox to store messages. In Palmer, a video teleconferencing method and apparatus is provided, and this patent is relied upon for its teaching of a frame rate control.

Accordingly, without conceding the propriety of modifying Ludwig in view of either Brunson or Palmer, it is submitted that such combinations still fail to teach or suggest Applicants' claimed invention.

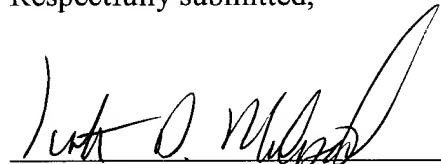
Therefore, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections of Claims 6, 7, 14, 15, 17-20, 25-27, 34, 35 and 37-40 are respectfully requested.

Accordingly, it is submitted that Applicants' invention as set forth in independent Claims 1, 21 and 41 is patentable over the cited art. In addition, dependent Claims 3-20 and 23-40 set forth additional features of Applicants' invention. Independent consideration of the dependent claims is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration and allowance of this application is deemed to be in order and such action is respectfully requested.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,



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